Application No. 09/973,479 Peter J. Hartmaier et al. Reply to Office Action of 08/11/2006

REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed August 11, 2006. Claims 20 and 22 have been amended to correct minor infelicities, and no new matter has been added by these amendments. Claims 20, 22 and 26 are currently pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1-19 and 25 were only withdrawn previously and the text of these claims are properly included in the claim listing of this amendment. Claims 21, 23 and 24 were previously canceled. Reconsideration of the claims in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 102

Claims 20, 22 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0056473 to *Arneson*.

Applicants provide herewith a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.132 by the present inventors. The Declaration is submitted to expedite prosecution. The Declaration demonstrates that to the extent that the claimed invention is disclosed at the passages of *Arneson* that have been cited by the Examiner (see pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action), the present inventors are the inventors and only inventors of that subject matter. Applicants note that the submission of this Declaration does not constitute agreement with the Examiner's analysis of the disclosure in *Arneson*

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 20, 22 and 26.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 1 /10 /07

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